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14. A method according to claim 12, wherein (b) is a polymer of 11-aminoundecanoic acid, 12-aminododecanoic acid, caprolactam, laurolactam, a salt of hexamethylenediamine and adipic acid or a salt of hexamethylenediamine and sebacic acid. --

REMARKS

The issues outstanding in the Office Action mailed November 24, 2000, are the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, §102 and §103. Reconsideration of these issues, in view of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Various grammatical and typographical amendments have been made to the claims, and it is submitted that this rejection is moot. Withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. As above, it is submitted that the clarifying amendments render this rejection moot, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Flesher '024 or Werenicz '887 or WO 96/15174 or Kaplan. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection is moot, inasmuch as it has not been applied to methods of composting. Withdrawal thereof is therefore respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Flesher or Werenicz or WO '174, each taken with Pia '951 and Rosner '916. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As admitted in the Office Action, the primary references fail to suggest use of the films as covers for compost heaps. Pia and Rosner are cited for their disclosure of the use of various materials to cover compost heaps. Indeed, it is noted in the present specification that covering of compost heaps is known. However, as discussed in the present specification, known covers for compost heaps are not wholly satisfactory. Thus, the use of the recited materials, in the claimed method, provides an unexpected advantage over those materials heretofore known, in that the fermentation is unexpectedly shortened, *i.e.*, made more efficient, while the compost pile is protected against rainwater. A careful study of the present examples shows that conventional films, which do not possess the characteristics of those claimed herein, do not enable as efficient composting, at least because they do not allow water vapor and gas to permeate, while forming a barrier against rainwater.

Moreover, the secondary references, disclosing covers for compost piles, do not suggest the use of the presently claimed materials in the process of claim 4. Rosner discloses a bubble of plastic which is clearly not permeable, since it is necessary to introduce air into the compost and to remove gas. See col. 1, lines 57-62, and col. 2, lines 19-25. The film disclosed in Pia possesses holes (see, e.g., the abstract and figures) and thus clearly does not possess the characteristics of the present materials.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the references fail to suggest the presently claimed method, and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

The claims of the application are submitted to be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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